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SUBJECT: U.S.-MEXICO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON CHALLENGES FACING
THE UNSC -- CORRECTED COPY

REF: MEXICO 353

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Charles V. Barclay. Reason

11. (SBU) Summary. A U.S. delegation headed by Acting Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of International Organizations James Warlick met March 13 with Mexico's UN team for consultations focusing on the UN budget, challenges facing Mexico as UNSC President in April, and human rights. Mexico shares many of our concerns relating to the growth of the UN budget. It appreciated hearing our views in particular on UN Missions in Africa where Mexico's experience is relatively limited. Mexico welcomed the prospect of fuller U.S. participation on the UN Human Rights Council and sought U.S. support for its candidacy to the Inter-American Human Rights Commission -- a matter it signaled it would take up with the Secretary when she visits Mexico next week. End Summary.

Synergy on the Budget, Assessments

12. (SBU) Mexico's Director for Financial Matters, Carolina Fernandez, conveyed Mexico's concerns with the spiraling costs of the SYG's "Special Political Missions" which she described as "out of control" and blamed for driving the UN budget's overall increases. She also stressed the importance Mexico attached to reducing its assessments, assuring us that while Mexico's proposal incorporates some elements of the EU's proposal it would not impact the U.S. ceiling. Warlick assured Mexico that we shared its concern on the UN budget and drew attention to the impact of how indirect costs on voluntary contributions are calculated. Mexico discussed its methodology for calculating scales of assessment and noted that its proposal keeps in place a ceiling for the U.S. Warlick remarked that Mexico's unique stature availed it an opportunity to serve as a bridge to the G-77 on the budget amongst other issues; Mexico agreed and signaled it was prepared to assume that role with greater energy.

Trading Views on Candidacies

13. (SBU) Mexico sought U.S. support for the Mexican candidate to the UN's Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) for elections to be held in 12010. Mexico also mentioned its interest in securing a seat on the International Civil Service Commission in 2010. In addition, Mexico stated that it will seek the reelection of its representative to the Committee on Contributions during elections also in 2010. Lastly, the Director General of Mexico's UN Office, Pablo Macedo, flagged Mexico's desire to secure a seat on the Inter-American Human Rights Commission. SRE's Director General for Human Rights and Democracy Alejandro Negrin returned to this issue indicating Mexico planned to raise this issue with the Secretary when she visits later in the month if Mexico has not secured U.S. support by then support by then.

¶4. (C) Warlick flagged our concern about Mexico's putting forward a candidate for the WHO's Executive Board which put it out of step with the traditional three years in/one year out approach of the U.S. If Mexico withdrew its candidate for the upcoming election we could pledge our support for Mexico's candidate in the next election. Macedo agreed Mexico's decision to vie for this seat in an off year violated past practice. Apparently, Mexico's Health Secretariat has the GOM lead on this matter. Nevertheless, Macedo signaled his office's desire to "correct" this situation by convincing the Health Secretariat that Mexico should withdraw its candidate.

¶5. (C) Both sides agreed that Egypt's candidate to UNESCO was unacceptable. Macedo said that Egypt's Ambassador visited him practically every week seeking the GoM's support for its candidate. Mexico's Ministry of Education has the lead on this decision but Macedo assured us that Mexico would like to support another candidate. He conveyed reservations about the current Brazilian UNESCO Deputy as a possible candidate. Mexico thought it was still premature to look to Peru to offer formally its candidate but that ultimately its person may prove a way forward. Macedo also said that Bulgarian candidate Bokovo had made a good impression on her recent visit to Mexico.

Visiting UN Work in Africa

¶6. (C) Mexico had originally requested these consultations with us out of a desire to focus on the UN's work in Africa in advance of Mexico's assumption of the UNSC Presidency in April. We touched on the following issues:

-- Western Sahara: Warlick advised Mexico's UNSC team that the SYG's Envoy to the Western Sahara Christopher Ross did not believe a new round of talks would be especially useful at this juncture. Rather, he hoped to organize a small informal discussion without preconditions in a neutral location. Noting MINURSO's mandate would come up for renewal in April, Warlick remarked that we shared Ross' desire for as few changes as possible in the mandate. Macedo agreed that a fresh start in discussions represented a good approach.

-- Sudan/Darfur: Warlick stressed the importance of UNSC unity in the face of Sudan's defiance of the ICC's decision to issue a warrant for al-Bashir's arrest. Macedo conveyed Mexico's commitment to respect for the ICC's decision. He remarked, however, that some African countries were threatening to withdraw from the ICC if its arrest warrant were enforced over Sudan's objections. He mentioned that he had heard Egypt was talking about convening a meeting to discuss the issue.

-- DRC: Warlick conveyed our concern over Kabila's decision that Indian peacekeepers were no longer needed. Their departure would create a significant vacuum there. He suggested Mexico might consider providing trainers and advisors to MONUC. Macedo described Mexico's desire to participate in PKOs but maintained the timing was not right for Mexico to do so now given internal political considerations including, but not limited to, the government's rather expansive efforts to tackle organized crime elements. Ultimately, if Mexico were to make a contribution to PKOs in the future, offering police elements as opposed to the military to activities closer to home like Haiti instead of Africa might prove more feasible.

-- Somalia: The Mexican side welcomed more insight into what the U.S. envisioned in terms of a UN role in Somalia. Warlick stressed the humanitarian issues driving our desire to see a UN mission created there.

What's Coming on Haiti, Afghanistan, and North Korea?

¶7. (C) With time running short, the two sides tackled Haiti, Afghanistan, and North Korea.

-- Haiti: In view of its lead for the UNSC on MINUSTAH, Mexico was keen to hear our views on the way ahead for the UN in Haiti. Given the recent visit by UNSC Permreps to Haiti and donor conferences on Haiti, it had every expectation Haiti would be on the UNSC's agenda in April. Warlick suggested we listen to what our Ambassadors had to offer on their return from Haiti. The international community probably only had a couple of years to get things right in Haiti so Mexico was well advised to focus on the work that we needed to take up on a priority basis. The Mexicans mentioned their interest in a possible Security Council ministerial in late April and noted that they hoped Secretary Clinton would consider attending.

-- Afghanistan: Mexico advised that its Federal Election Institute (IFE) had just produced a paper laying out a menu of options for providing assistance to Afghanistan on upcoming elections. Mexico's contribution could prove difficult given time was short and Mexico had its own elections to organize in July. Nevertheless, Mexico indicated it would be coming back to us on what it might possibly be able to offer in support of Afghan elections presently scheduled for August.

-- North Korea: Warlick reminded the Mexicans that the North Koreans plan to launch a "satellite" the first week of April and that this would represent a violation of its obligations under UNSC resolution 1718. Japan has already indicated it will request the UNSC convene to discuss this development. Macedo expressed appreciation for the heads up and suggested Mexico would be in contact with us on how to deal with this matter.

Mexico Welcomes U.S. Movement on Human Rights in the UN

¶8. (SBU) Warlick reinforced the U.S. desire to reengage as an observer with the UN's Human Rights Council. We believe that the international community needs a place where we can talk seriously about human rights, including in connection to specific countries. Opportunities exist to set a new tone on human rights issues and we would like to work with Mexico to explore these opportunities in a new spirit. The U.S. sent a delegation to explore the prospects for reengaging on the Durban document but there was not the political will to work closely with the U.S. on necessary changes. Mexico and the

U.S. have had their differences on Mexico's resolution on human rights and terrorism. We believe it is possible to overcome those differences through closer coordination and a deeper spirit of compromise.

¶9. (C) Negrin insisted on the importance Mexico attaches to the U.S. participation on the UN Human Rights Council given the U.S.'s historical leadership on human rights issues. He defended Mexico's record on human rights in the context of the recent Universal Periodic Review before the UNHRC and maintained Mexico had created a mechanism to follow-up on the recommendations that had been issued. He indicated that he was well-versed in the issues attending Mexico's resolution on human rights and terrorism and signaled his predisposition to work through those issues more amiably in the future.

U.S. Provides Brief on Sanctions

¶10. (SBU) Mexico, since January, has chaired the Somalia and Cote d'Ivoire Sanctions Committees. Its delegation was keen to discuss sanctions matters generally, the 1267 sanctions regime on al-Qaeda and the Taliban as well as specific issues facing the two committees it chairs. It welcomed U.S. views on due process issues for all sanctions regimes in view of recent European court decisions and took on board a briefing on the U.S. designations process. USDEL encouraged Mexico to work on developing guidelines for the Somalia sanctions committee and described how important the U.S. views the Cote d'Ivoire sanctions regime as a means for pressing all parties in that country to hold free and fair elections.

¶11. (C) Comment. Mexico clearly appreciated the opportunity this visit presented to learn our views on a whole host of issues, including UN activities in Africa where Mexico's experience is relatively thin. Mexico has signaled a desire to coordinate with us closely on some of the more complicated issues it likely will have to tackle in April when it assumes the UNSC presidency. No doubt, we may sometimes approach issues from a different perspective. Nevertheless, it is evident Mexico is committed to performing responsibly and wants to keep disagreements with us to a minimum. To the extent we can remain in close coordination with Mexico, demonstrate respect for its views, and offer it a fuller appreciation of our approach on key issues, we can look to Mexico to serve an effective bridge for us with Latin America and other parts of the developing world.

¶12. (U) This cable was cleared with A/S Warlick.
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